

News Release

UM Crookston Senior Beth Motley, Vadnais Heights, Minn., Student Director Extraordinaire

*By Itollefts on Thursday, December 5, 2013*When Beth Motley (in photo) talks about the latest theater performance at the University of Minnesota Crookston, it is easy to see she is comfortable in her role as student director. It is no wonder as the senior brings years of experience to her role.

Motley, an equine science major and music minor from Vadnais Heights, Minn., was first involved in theater as a freshman in high school where she says the theater program was well developed. She was part of the tech crew for plays in high school, and today, is leading the musical production of the Church Basement Ladies under the guidance of Associate Professor George French, who she says makes it fun.

In the time she has been here, she has worked on seven theatrical productions including Dracula, the Musical?, Zombie Prom, Oklahoma, and the current production of Church Basement Ladies. Her preference is to direct musical productions. "I like musicals best because of the way the music makes the story memorable," Motley says. "The cast has a good time, and so does the audience."

Since her first experience directing Dracula, she has steadily taken on more responsibility with each production. "It is very busy at first when you are reading scripts and selecting the cast," she continues. "Then, you have the props and set to consider. It is ready, set, wait at the beginning, but as the process moves along, I have to coordinate schedules which can be quite a challenge, and then all of sudden, it seems like there are a million last minute things that need to fall into place."

How many times has Motley been a cast member? Never. She says memorization is a stickler for her, but she loves to sing, and if she had to, she could dance. As far as the Church Basement Ladies goes, Motley saw the original production and loved it immediately. "The jokes are not hard to understand because there will be someone whose character you identify with," Motley says. "You will will relate to one of them and they will make you laugh even if you didn't grow up in a church in the era of the play."



The performance of Church Basement Ladies is scheduled for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, December 13, 14, 15, 2013, in Kiehle Auditorium at the U of M Crookston. On Friday and Saturday evenings the performance is at 7 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday at 2 p.m. Admission is \$5 for adults and \$3 for children 10 and under with a \$15 maximum for families.

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